

## LARGE-SCALE SOLAR ICE-MAKING MACHINE FOR FISHING COMMUNITY

The first commercial, completely automatic, solar electric ice-making plant was introduced last month in Chihuahua, Mexico by Sunwize Technologies. The ice-making plant will be maintained by a fishing co-operative of 70 families near the small agricultural community of Chorreras, 165 km east of Chihuahua.

Until now the community had no refrigeration facility of their own, so depended on buyers travelling from Chihuahua to purchase and transport their catch to market. Because the buyers provided the ice for transport, the buyer's arrival determined the fishing schedule and the size of the catch. Sunwize VP David Panico said 'The ice plant brings economic independence to the co-operative by enabling the members to store the fish in an insulated building and bring the product to market themselves. The plant will also increase fishing capacity, helping to increase income and raise the standard of living in this rural area of Mexico'.

The ice plant produces 500 kg of ice per day at peak capacity, and is powered by a 2400 W PV hybrid Power Station. Batteries ensure that the icemaker can run at night when air and water temperatures are lower, which increases ice production. A propane generator provides backup for extended periods of cloudy weather.